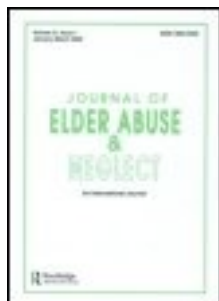


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### Note from Iran: Self-Reported Elder Abuse in Qazvin, 2012

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## COMMENTARY

**Note from Iran: Self-Reported Elder Abuse in Qazvin, 2012**

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**Abstract:**

This commentary provides a first look at self-reported instances of elder abuse by a sample of people 60 years and older living in Qazvin, Iran. Methods: 600 community-dwelling persons, drawn from the registry files of each health center in Qazvin, completed questionnaires during April to October 2012. Results: At least 80% of the participants reported experiencing some form of psychological abuse, financial abuse and/or neglect at least once during a two month period. Physical and sexual abuse were rarely reported. Conclusions: Despite a strong Iranian cultural emphasis on respect for elders, the self-reporting of elder

abuse, especially psychological abuse, is greater than our expectation. We recommend that health-related policies and programs begin to identify elder abuse and neglect as a first step in prevention.

KEY WORDS: elder abuse, psychological, physical, financial, neglect

## INTRODUCTION

As part of efforts by Qazvin University of Medical Sciences in Iran to implement a comprehensive health program in Qazvin Province, a Working Group on Mental and Social Health was formed to provide health policy recommendations for identifying and controlling violence against high-risk people living in the Province. It was determined that vulnerable elders would be potentially at risk for violence, but there existed no knowledge of whether or not elders in the Province were subjected to abusive or neglectful behaviors, and, if they were, the types and extent of the mistreatment. As elder abuse and neglect could lead to negative health outcomes such as multiple hospitalizations, medical non-adherence, living in squalor, pressure ulcers, untreated psychiatric and medical illness, falls, and increased mortality risk, the Working Group wanted to gain preliminary data through a survey of community-dwelling elders in the city of Qazvin. The ethics review board of the Qazvin University of Medical Science approved the study.